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THE METAPHYSICAL JUSTIFICATION
OF RELIGION

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THE METAPHYSICAL
JUSTIFICATION OF
RELIGION

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LECTURES DELIVERED IN THE
UNIVERSITY OF LONDON, MAY 1928

BY

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PREFACE

THIS book consists of three lectures given in May 1928 at King's College by invitation of London University. The lectures are printed as delivered, except for a few minor changes in the form of expression, and for a re-arrangement of the material in the last lecture.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER I

THE NECESSITY OF A METAPHYSIC OF RELIGION

	PAGE
I. THEOLOGY AND RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE	I
II. EXPERIENCE IMPLIES THE SUBJECT-OBJECT RELATION	5
III. EXPERIENCE IS NOT THE FINAL FORM OF KNOWLEDGE	10
IV. THE INSUFFICIENCY OF THE PSYCHOLOGY OF RELIGION	19
A. <i>Its Achievements.</i>	
B. <i>Its Limitations.</i>	

	PAGE
V. PSYCHOLOGY ITSELF LEADS TO A METAPHYSICAL INQUIRY . . .	32
A. <i>Psychology and Illusion.</i>	
B. <i>Psychology Recognizes Re- ligion's own Claim to Objectivity.</i>	

CHAPTER II

OUTLINES OF A METAPHYSIC OF RELIGION

I. THE NEED FOR A METAPHYSIC . . .	42
II. A RETURN UPON SCHLEIERMACHER . . .	44
III. THE CONSTELLATION OF THE GREAT VALUES	59
IV. THE HOLY AS THE COMMON ROOT OF THE TRUE AND THE GOOD . . .	66
V. THE BEAUTIFUL AND THE OTHER VALUES	72
VI. THE HOLY AS MIRRORED IN RE- LIGIOUS EXPERIENCE . . .	78

CHAPTER III

CONFIRMATION AND DEVELOPMENT
OF THE METAPHYSIC

	PAGE
I. RECAPITULATION OF THE PREVIOUS ARGUMENT	85
II. A CONFIRMATION FROM THE CON- STITUTION AND COURSE OF NATURE	91
III. THE PRACTICAL PROBLEM OF LIFE DEMANDS A SPECULATIVE SOLU- TION	101
IV. DEFENCE OF A SPECIAL CON- STRUCTION OF THE VALUES	113
V. THE DIVINE PERSONALITY	124

CHAPTER I

THE NECESSITY OF A METAPHYSIC OF RELIGION

I. *Theology and Religious Experience*

IT is one of the commonest assumptions of modern theologians that all doctrinal construction must start from religious experience. First, it is said, we have a religious experience ; then, we reflect upon it, analyse it and systematize the results of our analysis. In this way our experience of religion becomes theology ; just as our general experience of the world by a similar process of reflection, analysis and systematization becomes science or philosophy. This is a widely accepted and acceptable view ; many outside the ranks of professional theologians would agree that it represented sound

sense, and comes as near as may be to the truth of the matter.

Yet there are not wanting at times voices of protest. There are those who insist that the proper basis of theology is not experience, but is an objective Divine Revelation, whether in Creed, Bible or Living Church. Such theologians defend their position by maintaining that religious experience as a subjective phenomenon is created by a knowledge objectively valid, upon which it depends for its very existence. They are never weary of protesting, that the attempt to found theology on religious experience shuts us up in a most unsatisfactory subjectivity, which there is no means of overcoming. For, even if it be granted that our individual religious experiences can be compared, and compounded into a common or group experience, the taint of subjectivity still appears to them to cling to this common experience. A majority is not always right. The mere

multiplication of experiences does not alter their quality ; nor is the least common denominator of many experiences more objective than a single individual experience.

This is what is said by those who, while rejecting the appeal to religious experience, firmly believe in the truth of religion. There are others who are willing enough to accept the statement, that theology is based upon religious experience, but only in order to argue that it is a science falsely so called. Such disallow the support of either reason or revelation for religion. Reason, they hold, yields no religious truths ; while the existence of a revelation is an unprovable assumption. Undoubtedly, men have experiences which they call religious ; but there is no guarantee that they represent anything more than daydreams of the imagination. They are illusions, which the mind itself creates in order to escape for a while from the hard and pressing

realities of daily existence. They no more correspond to fact than do the visions of the opium-smoker ; and they are indulged in for precisely the same purposes as the narcotic.

It is intended to examine the modern principle of basing theology upon experience, in view of these attacks upon it. The examination will be critical, but its aim is to justify the principle. It is undertaken in the belief that such justification is most urgently and seriously required, in fact that it is probably the most pressing of all problems for the modern theologian. It is easy and popular to appeal in theological works simply to religious experience without any sufficiently careful consideration of its epistemological value and metaphysical import. But as long as the appeal fails to rest on a critique of religious experience, in which these problems are seriously considered, so long will all our theological constructions remain unsound. We do

not know for certain whether we are dealing with reality or with illusion.

II. *Experience implies the Subject-Object Relation*

We are to discuss the validity of religious experience. A beginning may be made with the very obvious proposition that *religious experience is a particular form of experience in general*. This observation will perhaps carry us further than we at first expect. Before we can come to any conclusions about the validity of religious experience, it is most necessary above all things to get exact ideas as to what we mean by experience in general.

Here a reference may usefully be made to Ward's *Psychological Principles*. In seeking to define psychology as a science, the Cambridge philosopher most suggestively compares the standpoint of experience, from which that science is at present studied, with the biological point

of view taken up by Aristotle, and with the standpoint of consciousness which was characteristic of Descartes.

Aristotle started with an objective view of things. He treated the soul as the energy of the body, and in consequence found it difficult to make a place in his scheme for the pure reason. The latter had to be added to the animated body from without, and remained in the end disconnected from it, and independent of it. Aristotle's problem was to get from the object to the subject.

Descartes began from the pure reason, and considered self-consciousness as its form. His problem then was to get from the subject to the object, which the actual contents of empirical consciousness seemed to imply.

In opposition to these one-sided positions, the standpoint of experience taken up by the modern psychologist is defined as implying the *subject-object relation*. Ward explains what this means, as follows :

“To deal adequately with experience we must combine what is positive in both these alternative views. The so-called operations and states of consciousness are not mere modes *in vacuo* : they imply an active and affectible subject, and it can only conduce to clearness to make this fact as explicit as possible. The so-called contents of consciousness again, though not necessarily actions or affections of the subject, are never objects *per se* ; but to be contents for consciousness they must be objects for a subject. The form of consciousness cannot, then, be expressed . . . by any single term which does not recognize the duality of subject and object. The one term which does recognize this duality most simply is experience.”¹

What is the bearing of this statement on our theological problem? It teaches us two things :

(1) The standpoint of experience, however natural it may seem nowadays, has

¹ *Op. cit.*, 2nd ed., p. 24.

been arrived at by a transcending of earlier positions. Views taken from it possess a concrete character, which we may illustrate to ourselves by thinking of stereoscopic vision with two eyes, as compared with the vision of one eye alone.

(2) This concrete character of experience explains how it is, that a theology described from this standpoint is naturally criticized by those who occupy a simpler position.

Each of these points requires to be developed in more detail. In the first place, we see from Ward's statement, that to accept the standpoint of experience as a basis for theology means that we leave behind us simpler outlooks, merely objective or merely subjective, as having been proved to be inadequate in the course of thought. Instead of accepting such older points of view, we take up a position which, however necessary it may be, is of a complex

character, and therefore is inevitably provocative of endless problems.

Experience implies the subject-object relation. But what is the subject? What is the object? How are they related? Is there any priority between them, and if so, of what kind? All these questions spring to life at once from the mere assumption of the standpoint of experience. It may be necessary to occupy this standpoint. The course of thought may have led thither with absolute certainty. But we cannot take up our ground as a secure basis for further advance until we have first examined and explored its nature and character. We must see clearly upon what we are proposing to build our theological doctrine.

Secondly, however, there is one thing that can be seen at once, even before this exploration has taken place. It is plain that it is precisely the twofold character of the principle of experience, which has both led modern theologians to make use

of it and has occasioned their opponents to object to theologies developed from it.

The modern theologian, when he speaks of the experiential character of theology, implies that theological doctrines cannot be treated in a purely objective manner. They do not refer to things, which may indeed correspond to subjective interests, but can perfectly well be discussed and defined without any mention of those interests.

The opponent of modern theology fears that any recognition of subjective interest will so affect the value of theological statements, that there can be no certainty, whether we are dealing with objective reality or with illusions.

Is there any way of getting beyond this opposition of contradictory opinions? That is what we have now to see.

III. *Experience is not the final form of Knowledge*

Let us consider more exactly how the problem of the objectivity of experience

arises. Here we come upon a second most important proposition about experience. *It is a form of knowledge, not yet related to the ultimate grounds of thought and being.* From which proposition follows of necessity the consequence, that experiential knowledge is insecure, until this relation has taken place.

From a recent and famous psychologist and philosopher let us go back to an older philosopher and theologian, now undeservedly neglected—Christian Hermann Weisse, pupil of Hegel, and master of Lotze. His *magnum opus*, entitled *A Philosophical Dogmatic or Philosophy of Christianity*,¹ stands among the finest examples of modern speculative theology, side by side with Rothe's better known *Theological Ethics*, with which it has the closest affinities. Weisse's system is built upon the great scale, it is marked by astonishing architectonic power, and it is

¹ *Philosophische Dogmatik oder Philosophie des Christenthums*, 3 vols., 1855-62.

carried out into a wealth of detail with that prodigious thoroughness that characterizes German work. Weisse hoped that his book would be a κτῆμα ἐς αἰεί. It is to be feared that posterity has not been very grateful for the gift. The work has never been reprinted since it first appeared in three volumes from 1855 to 1862. Much of the material is of course now inevitably antiquated ; yet by its sheer power of constructive thought the book still remains a mine wealthy in suggestion for those who care for system and method in theology, and who believe that no theology is secure, unless it is at the same time a philosophy.

Weisse, as a modern theologian, starts from experience ; but, as a philosopher, he takes the trouble to say what he means by experience. He writes as follows :

“The word experience in the use we ordinarily make of it in common life, means on the one hand something more than a mere feeling or subjective state of

the soul ; on the other hand it means something less than true knowledge or science. It signifies a feeling, intuition, or perception ; or still more frequently it signifies a group of similar and related feelings, intuitions, and perceptions, precisely in so far as their content becomes an object of the reflective consciousness, and is worked up by it into a system of objective ideas or concepts. But it is not implied that such a system is to be called science in the proper sense of the word. It is not already complete : it is not even included within fairly well defined limits with a view to completion. Above all, it is not related to the ultimate grounds of knowledge in the way that we presuppose in regard of a truly scientific system.”¹

In other words, it is fundamental to the idea of experience, that while it possesses a certain completeness, it is still inevitably partial and incomplete as compared with

¹ *Op. cit.*, vol. i, p. 13.

the totality, which is the end and aim of philosophy.

The above important passage from Weisse carries us a step further forwards in our argument. We note in it indeed, first of all, the agreement with Ward. Both philosophers point out, that we do not signify by experience simply something completely subjective, as the objectors to an experiential theology are wont to assume. On the contrary, when we speak of knowing by experience, we imply that there is an objective factor in our knowledge.

But what is new, is a reflection on the limits of religious experience, just in so far as it is experience. When we speak of it, we certainly do not think simply of individual moments of experience : we think of such moments as woven together into some sort of tissue, of which we speak as a whole. But equally, on the other hand, we do not imply, that this tissue of religious experience has been com-

pletely analysed, or completely systematized. We most certainly do not imply, that it has been related with assurance to the ultimate grounds of thought and being. Religious experience, as we generally understand it, is in a middle position. It is something more than individual subjective states, but it is not finally unified and co-ordinated, either in itself, or with all the rest of our knowledge of reality.

We have now found, with the help of Weisse, the reason why so much remains uncertain with regard to the meaning and worth of religious experience. Till it has finally been co-ordinated in the way just indicated, there can never be complete certainty as to its epistemological value or metaphysical import, nor can there be agreement as to the principles of its interpretation. The questions of the validity, and of the interpretation of religious experience, both have their origin in the same source. They rise alike out

of the very nature of what we mean, when we speak of religion under the name of experience.

But there is a further lesson to be drawn from Weisse. The only way, in which conflicts as to the meaning of religious experience can be overcome, is by the relation of our experience to the ultimate grounds of thought and being. There must be a *completion of experience*, or at least an inclusion of it "within fairly well defined limits with a view to completion." In a word, to the psychology, which studies experience and bodies of experience, just as they actually exist, without reference to ultimate questions as to their validity and worth, there must succeed the epistemology and metaphysic, which tries every single experience and body of experience by the criterion of the Whole of Thought and Being.

For confirmation of these results, if such is needed, we may turn to Weisse's great master, Hegel. No philosopher has

seen with greater clearness the truth we have arrived at, or has expressed his insight into it with greater force. Hegel accepts the principle of experience as the starting-point of knowledge. He dwells on the subjective element in experience, as the necessary point of departure for even the highest philosophical generalizations.

He says, as follows :

“The principle of experience carries with it the unspeakably important condition that, in order to accept and believe any fact, we must be in contact with it ; or, in more exact terms, that we must find the fact united and combined with the certainty of our own selves. We must be in touch with our subject-matter, whether it be by means of our external senses, or, else, by our profounder mind and our intimate self-consciousness.”¹

This is a full recognition of the value of experience, as the universal starting-

¹ *The Logic of Hegel*, tr. by Wallace, 2nd ed., p. 12.

point of knowledge. But Hegel also says in a neighbouring passage :

“ Even experience, as it surveys the wide range of inward and outward existence, has sense enough to distinguish the mere appearance, which is transient and meaningless, from what in itself deserves the name of actuality.”¹

In brief, Hegel maintains that experience only truly furnishes us with knowledge, when it can be included in a system.

We may perhaps not all of us be Hegelians, nor be as certain as was the famous philosopher, of being able to work out the absolute system of knowledge. But it will at least remain true, that experience will only furnish us with real knowledge, when the different continents of experience have been mapped out upon the globe of truth, in such a way that routes from one to another become possible and even well defined. In particular, religious experience will only furnish us

¹ *The Logic of Hegel*, tr. by Wallace, 2nd ed., p. 9.

with theological knowledge, when it is thus related to all other knowledge. A theology that is not defined in this way, a theology that is not also a philosophy, is a theology that has failed of its purpose.

IV. *The Insufficiency of the Psychology of Religion*

This leads us next to the important proposition, that *a merely psychological treatment of religion is insufficient*. This proposition will become evident, if we consider (1) what psychology can do for the study of religion, but (2) how the psychology of religion itself leads us to an inevitable contradiction, and thus demonstrates its own limitations. These things will occupy us for the rest of this chapter.

A. *The Achievements of the Psychology of Religion*

Let us begin, then, by recognizing the value of the psychological study of religion.

A psychology of religion is the natural beginning for those who found religion upon experience. Such a science will take religious experience as its subject-matter, isolating it from everything else, and endeavouring to understand it in accordance with its own immanent laws. The last hundred years has been amazingly fertile in psychologies of religion, each with its own speciality. To mention only some of the principal names, we have Schleiermacher, Ritschl, and Kaftan in Germany, to whom may be added the American, William James. It may be shown, that, in one way or other, the essence of all the psychologies of religion connected with these great names, is to interpret the religious experience, with increasing clearness, by means of the immanent and necessary connexion of the experience of God and the experience of salvation. In religion God is experienced as a saving God. Religion is not an otiose contemplation of His Being,

but is a deeply emotional attitude, in which fear and hope, doubt and trust, are strangely and wonderfully mingled.

(1) A beginning may naturally be made with Schleiermacher, the true father of all modern psychologies of religion. In his famous *Speeches on Religion* God appears as the Absolute Unity of the universe, with which we have communion, neither by knowledge nor action, but through intuition and feeling.¹ A sense of the Whole accompanies our knowledge and our action like a sacred music ; so that the theoretical and the practical attitudes to the world, in themselves so different, the one receptive and the other active, are brought into harmony.

In Schleiermacher's later work *The Christian Faith*, his psychology becomes clearer, and distinguishes itself more firmly from the æsthetic attitude, with which it

¹ This is the form of statement in the 1st edition ; the 2nd and 3rd editions omit "intuition" and speak of "immediate feeling" only.

is in some danger of being confused in the *Speeches*. We are told, just as before, that religion is neither knowledge nor action, but is feeling. But it is now defined to be a feeling of absolute dependence—Schleiermacher explains the definition in the following manner :

In respect of the world we feel ourselves, partly free, partly dependent. We are dependent on the world, so far as we know it : we are free, so far as we act upon it. But beyond this partial freedom and partial dependence, there is again a feeling of complete and absolute dependence, in which we no longer contrast ourselves with the rest of the world, but rather feel united with it in dependence upon God. Here the specifically religious element is more distinct than it was in the *Speeches*. There is in the new form of statement no risk, that God may be identified with the æsthetic harmony of the universe. In the key-phrase “ absolute dependence,” the peculiar note of religion

is firmly struck. The experience of God is joined by this form of words with the experience of salvation. From the ceaseless alternation of partial freedom and partial dependence, in which man finds no rest and no security, he falls back upon the Power that determines the Whole, himself included ; and in so doing, he finds deliverance and peace.

(2) In Ritschl's psychology of religion the intimate connexion between the experience of God and the experience of salvation becomes still clearer. Religion, says this great theologian, arises where man has come to value himself as different from nature, and to count himself, not as a thing among natural things, but as a person and a spiritual being. In such a position he finds himself hampered by the restrictions placed upon his attempt to assert his personality, both by nature directly, and by other persons acting through nature.

Out of this strait man seeks help in

God. Religion, says Ritschl, expresses itself in value-judgments, in which man either declares his confidence and joy in the Divine salvation, or else grievously complains of his lack of Divine assistance and comfort.

(3) Kaftan presents a similar chain of thoughts. For him, the central interest of religion is in the good which man seeks for himself, either in the world or beyond it. But religion only arises, when man ceases to hope for the good from his own endeavours, and relies instead upon the Divine assistance. In religion, God and the longed-for good are most intimately connected.

(4) A glance at the psychology of James may complete this brief outline of its history in the last century. James stands nearer to Schleiermacher than to Ritschl or Kaftan. The deliverance in which he makes religion centre, is more from a discord in our own nature, than from a discord with the world, or with other men.

He says as follows :

“ There is a certain uniform deliverance, in which religions all appear to meet. It consists of two parts : (1) an uneasiness ; and (2) its solution.

“ (1) The uneasiness, reduced to its simplest terms, is a sense that there is *something wrong about us*, as we naturally stand.

“ (2) The solution is a sense that *we are saved from the wrongness* by making proper connexion with the higher powers.”¹

In more developed minds, says James, the wrongness in question takes a moral character, and the experience of salvation takes a mystical tinge. The individual becomes conscious that the higher part of him “ is conterminous and continuous with a more of the same quality, which is operative in the universe outside of him, and which he can keep in working touch with, and in a fashion get on board of and save

¹ *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, p. 508.

himself when all his lower being has gone to pieces in the wreck.”¹

To sum up, the psychology of religion, in these great representative exponents of the science, reaches the conclusion, that the true way of comprehending the unity of religious experience in all its modes, is by connecting the experience of God most closely with the experience of salvation. Religion is above all things a practical belief in, and rest upon, a saving God. Out of this, its central focus, develop all manner of feelings, ideas, beliefs, practices, and expectations. There are states of joy and peace. There are descriptions of the action of the saving God and of His nature and character. There are ways of entering into relation with Him. There are testimonies as to deliverances attained and experienced, and there are hopes and expectations of deliverances to be experienced.

All this is most important and true, and

¹ *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, loc. cit.

the just study and consideration of it is of great value for the establishment of a properly rounded and organized theology. It helps towards the creation of a theology, that is no arbitrary collection of fragments from unrelated sources, but is all of a piece, and is a whole. The theologies of Schleiermacher and Ritschl, being constituted along these lines, possess such a unity, which is their great merit.

Ritschl, in particular, was justly conscious of the superiority of his own theology, as thus constituted, over the unpsychological theologies of his critics. He says, describing the method of his own theology :

“ In order to comprehend the content of Christianity as a totality composed of rightly ordered particular data, we must occupy one and the same standpoint throughout.”¹

¹ *The Christian Doctrine of Justification and Reconciliation.*
E.T., p. 4.

Again, with respect to the method of his critics, he says :

“ When they confront a rounded exposition of theology, represented on a single surface, with their many-angled mirror, of course they get nothing but a broken reflection. But the blame falls, not on one who has ventured to employ the systematic method in theology, but upon the critics who cherish the belief that their own fragmentary knowledge, which loses itself in a variety of tentative efforts, complies with the conditions of systematic thought.”¹

We may then freely admit the advantage of the appeal to experience for the foundation of theology, in so far as, by the help of psychology, it helps to bring about a much to be desired unification and simplification of the subject. It gives us a criterion, by which we may test what is central and what is circumferential, what is essential and what is adventitious. In

¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 5.

other words, the psychology of religion, as the science of religious experience, can help us to analyse, sort and sift the first crude data of religious feelings and intuitions, and to build them up into a system of experience worthy of the name.

B. *The Limitations of the Psychology of Religion*

But now we have to look at the other side of the shield. Amazing as have been the triumphs of the modern psychology of religion, astonishing as has been the insight which has been gained through it into the nature of religious experience, nevertheless, considered as an instrument of theological method, it exhibits a striking defect, and one that, unless it can be remedied, must inevitably prove fatal to its ultimate usefulness. That defect is that it is too one-sidedly *subjective*. It is no doubt true, as Ward so well points out, that psychology, in beginning with experience, starts from the subject-object

relation. But, though it presupposes this relation, it works out its problems, as far as religion is concerned, from the inner side. It asks how one feeling, one image, one thought, grows out of another. It shows in this way the necessary connexion of feelings, images, and thoughts. But it never raises or faces the true problem of the object implied by those thoughts, images, and feelings. It is no doubt a psychical or psychological object. But is it a metaphysical object? Does it possess reality? It is doubtless true, as Weisse says, that experience properly signifies "a group of similar and related feelings, intuitions, and perceptions, precisely in so far as their content becomes an object of the reflective consciousness, and is worked up by it into a system of objective presentations or concepts."¹

But it is also true, that the last word on the objectivity of these presentations and concepts has not been spoken, as long as

¹ *Loc. cit.*

we go round and round, relating them together in a merely psychological way. Whatever objectivity they may possess, is implied or even consciously accepted, but is not discussed or demonstrated, so long as we keep on the ground of psychology only.

The final question of the objectivity of religion can only be raised in connexion with what Weisse refers to as the ultimate grounds of Knowledge ; and these must necessarily involve also the ultimate grounds of Being (as indeed in Weisse's system they explicitly do). From the psychology of religion we are bound to go on to the *epistemology of religion*. We must ask what ground we have for holding that the beliefs of religion are valid, and that its feelings are justified and warranted. The answer to these questions constitutes the epistemology of religion ; but this again in its turn must lead us to the *metaphysic of religion*. We have not merely to consider the relation of religion

to the ultimate grounds of knowledge, we have also to relate it to the ultimate grounds of Being. All questions as to the validity of knowledge finally merge themselves into the question of the objective reality of its content.

V. Psychology itself leads to a Metaphysical Inquiry

What is more, the psychology of religion itself leads us to the threshold of metaphysical investigation.

A. Psychology and Illusion

The psychological way of investigating religion has led some psychologists to explain it independently of any objective validity of its content. Here, for instance, is the way in which James introduces and describes the views of Leuba on religion :

“Taking creeds and faith-states together as forming ‘religions’ and treating

these as purely subjective phenomena, without regard to the question of their 'truth,' we are obliged, on account of their extraordinary influence upon action and endurance, to class them among the most important biological functions of mankind. Their stimulant and anæsthetic effect is so great that Professor Leuba, in a recent article, goes so far as to say that so long as men can *use* their God, they care very little who He is, or even whether He is at all. 'The truth of the matter can be put,' says Leuba, 'in this way : *God is not known, He is not understood ; He is used*—sometimes as meat-purveyor, sometimes as moral support, sometimes as friend, sometimes as object of love. If He proves Himself useful, the religious consciousness asks no more than that. Does God really exist ? How does He exist ? What is He ? are so many irrelevant questions. Not God, but life, more life, a larger, richer, more satisfying life, is, in the last analysis, the end of religion.

The love of life, at any and every level of development, is the religious impulse.' ”¹

It is only a step from this view of Leuba's to the dictum that the gods are personified human ideals. We objectify our ideals, it is said, and we project them from us, in order in this way by concentration upon them to gather strength for their realization. Thus Feuerbach psychologically explained the Christian dogma of the Trinity. If religion consists in man's objectification and projection of his ideal, then God is, firstly, the objectified Reason. This is God the Father. Secondly, He is the hypostatized principle of love and friendship. This is God the Son. Thirdly, He is an objectification of the religious sentiment itself, the heart's sighing after God. This is God the Holy Ghost.

Even Kaftan is not so very far from the view of Leuba, when he stresses the religious priority of the idea of the good over that of the God who gives it. He

¹ James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, p. 506.

says that Buddhism, which in its original form is an atheistic religion, shows that belief in God is not strictly necessary to religion : the only point of religion absolutely necessary is salvation or deliverance. Of course, Kaftan does not believe that Buddhism is the true religion : he does not for a moment think that the true religion can do without God. But it is remarkable enough, that he thinks that any religion can do without God.

This, then, is one result of the psychology of religion. For all the service that it does, in furnishing us with an immanent unification of religious experience, it tends, in the hands of some of its exponents, to compensate for this good gift, by throwing doubt upon the objectivity of such experience.

B. *Psychology recognizes Religion's own Claim to Objectivity*

Yet, on the other hand, an exact psychology of religion cannot fail to observe

that the claim to possess objective knowledge is very vital to religion. Troeltsch says well, after a prolonged probing of the case :

“ It appears as a clear result from these discussions, that religion actually and always is a life-process, different from all experience of mere idealities, and has its centre of gravity in that relation to a superhuman Being, in which the meaning and the fate of our life are concluded : it is such a relation, that it always itself claims to be. The question can only be, whether this self-assertion deserves trust, or whether it, and with it religion itself, is a self-deception which we must explain in some way.”¹

So also Weisse, at the very outset of the great work to which reference has already been made, distinguishes carefully between a *knowledge of religion*, such as philosophy may seek to attain to, and *religious knowledge*, as a necessary part of

¹ *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche*, 1895, p. 397.

religion itself. Religion is not only an *object* of knowledge, as the material of a science or even of a philosophy of religion ; but is also the *subject* of a particular knowledge of its own, the destruction of which would be the destruction of religion.

The insufficiency of psychology in dealing with religion is, therefore, now fully demonstrated. On the one hand, it comes easy to psychology to try to explain religion as an illusion biologically valuable. On the other hand, the psychology of religion must recognize that the admission of such a result would destroy religion, with whatever value it possesses.

It has already been indicated in what direction a way out of this dilemma is to be found. *It must come through an epistemology of religion culminating in a metaphysic of religion.* No one in recent times has emphasized this truth more perpetually and more consistently than the German theologian, Karl Heim, a

man of whom more ought to be heard in this country. His theology would do us much more good than the Barthianism, which is now so loudly proclaimed upon the housetops. For a quarter of a century Heim's lifework has been directed to the establishing of the claim of religion to a valid knowledge of reality. His aim has been to refute those who, like Feuerbach, would see in religion no more than a mere projection of human ideals, and so at worst a valueless illusion, and at best a self-deliverance on the part of man by a process of recollection and concentration of his energies. Against all such views Heim stands for a *metaphysical justification of religion*. Here are his own words :

“ There is only one way to get beyond the deduction of religion from the needs and postulates of the human heart. That way is, no longer in defining the essence of religion to treat the concept and the existence of the human subject as a self-explaining datum, but to go back behind

this presupposition and choose a fresh starting-point. This starting-point must transcend what is continually presupposed, when we speak of a human self in general. That is, it must transcend the distinction between the self and the not-self and between a self and the multitude of other selves.”¹

This is very much the same thing as what Weisse suggests, when he teaches that experience is not sufficiently guaranteed until it is linked up to the ultimate grounds of knowledge. As long as we fail to do this, experience means either the experience of a single self or, at most, the common experience of a society of single selves, who happen to share a common life, and so see eye to eye and feel in unison. But even such a common experience, though it be that of a large body of people, is not finally accredited, till it can be linked up with the ultimate grounds of knowledge, that is, with the

¹ *Leitfaden der Dogmatik*, 1st ed., p. 25.

ultimate principles of thought and being. Only when this has been effected, can we obtain deliverance from the radical peril that besets a purely experiential theology—the terrible, nerve-racking anxiety, whether after all the consensus on which it is founded be only a consensus of illusion. To get on to solid ground we must have recourse to metaphysics, to first principles of thought, which are also first principles of being. Our epistemology of religion must end either in utter scepticism or in a metaphysic of religion, which will assure us of an objective ground of religious knowledge, and thus finally deliver us from the circle of mere subjectivity.

The “urge to metaphysic” is very strong just now in the theology of our time. The days when metaphysic could be treated as a tissue of scholastic abstractions are surely over. Only if we can link up our religious experience with the ultimate grounds of thought and being, only if we can supplement our psychology of religion

with a metaphysic of religion, shall we attain to a position in which the theologian need not be compelled simply to orate in conventicles of kindred spirits, but may address himself without fear and without reserve to universal humanity.

CHAPTER II

OUTLINES OF A METAPHYSIC OF RELIGION

I. *The Need for a Metaphysic*

THE result of the previous chapter was the conviction that if the experiential method in theology is to be securely based, it must have its foundation in a metaphysic of religion. The psychology of religion alone is insufficient for the purpose. It affords only an imperfect survey of religious experience. It proceeds wholly upon immanent principles, and while it can do much to reduce our religious experience to a coherent system, it can do nothing to meet the objection that the whole system, however harmonious in itself, is illusory in character, and is no more than a projection of human ideals and human wishes upon the void.

The famous schoolman, Anselm of Canterbury, took exception to certain religious theories of his time upon the Atonement, because, however beautiful they might be, they had no solid foundation. They were, he said, till such a foundation was established for them, only pictures painted upon air. He demanded for them a basis of necessity, in other words, a metaphysical basis ; without this, he held that they were but pleasing phantasies.

It is this same principle, that must be applied to the study of religion in general : we must have a metaphysic of religion as its basis, or else the unanswered question, whether after all religion is only illusion, must remain a permanent and ever-increasing danger. What can be more delightful to the eye than the iridescent colours of the prismatic spectrum, as they appear upon the surface of a bubble ? But the stability of the colours depends on the tension of the film ; and if the

tension be sufficiently increased, the bubble will burst and the colours disappear. We do not want to think that religion is a bubble of the imagination, which cannot bear the strain which the world in which it moves ever increasingly puts upon it. If a break-up of religion is to be avoided, we must show, as Anselm says, that religion consists of something more than pictures painted upon air. We must, in a word, establish a metaphysic of religion.

II. *A Return upon Schleiermacher*

Some suggestions towards a metaphysic of religion will form the substance of the present chapter. But before we proceed to them, it will be worth while to return to the psychologies of religion, which were described in the first chapter. We shall ask, whether they were related in any way by their authors to a metaphysic of religion. In other words, we shall inquire, what was the attitude of these philosophers

and theologians towards the matter in which we are specially interested.

It appears to be true, that the development of the psychology of religion in the century after Schleiermacher, so far as it is reflected in the theories brought forward, was a progress *in the wrong direction*. It moved more and more away from metaphysic, and more and more towards the idea that *psychology can be self-sufficient*. In fact, it tended towards the notion that psychology alone can be an adequate basis for both philosophy and theology. This is the frame of mind which the Germans call "psychologism." Towards the end of the last century psychologism seemed regnant and triumphant.

Such was not the doctrine of Schleiermacher, the author of the experiential method in modern theology. His design to build a theological system upon the ground of religious experience was by no means guided by the idea that the

psychology of religion is a sufficient starting-point for theology. *Schleiermacher's psychology of religion had a metaphysical basis.*

It is true, that Schleiermacher attached great importance to a right psychology of religion, and that he made a most fundamental contribution to the subject. He was, in fact, the true father of the modern psychology of religion, just as he has been the father of modern theology in general. But, all the same, Schleiermacher's psychology of religion was involved in the closest possible way, through an epistemology, with his metaphysic. To separate his psychology of religion from its metaphysical background is entirely to miss its true significance. Yet it has been done too often. It is to be feared that it is what has been done too much in this country in particular, where Schleiermacher's theology has received much attention, but his general philosophy has been neglected.

The great books by which we know Schleiermacher are his two masterpieces, the earlier entitled *Speeches on Religion*,¹ and the later entitled *The Christian Faith*.² These works contain his philosophy of religion and his systematic theology respectively. We have a most admirable translation of the former into English by Dr. Oman, and the essential content of the latter has been made accessible to English readers in the *Theology of Schleiermacher* by Dr. Cross and in Dr. Selbie's *Schleiermacher*.³

But behind the *Speeches on Religion* and *The Christian Faith*, there rise Schleiermacher's fundamental philosophical works, like great mountain peaks, austere and forbidding, containing nevertheless the sources from which the fertile plains of his religious and theological theory are watered. The dependence of Schleier-

¹ *Reden über die Religion*: 1st ed., 1799; 2nd, 1806; 3rd, 1821.

² *Der christliche Glaube*: 1st ed., 1821; 2nd ed., 1831.

³ English translation now published (1929).

macher's theology upon his philosophy is not in doubt, even though in some cases the philosophy actually found the later expression.

Two books especially demand attention. These are Schleiermacher's metaphysical system, the *Dialectics*¹ and his *Outline of Philosophical Ethics*,² which gives the general application of his metaphysical doctrine to concrete experience. Neither is a complete work. Both were put together from the lecture-notes of students. Nevertheless, each is a work of extraordinary power and astonishing fertility of combination. We may note in particular the magistral verdict of Troeltsch on the *Ethics*. He compares this work of Schleiermacher with the whole system of Hegel and gives it the preference as a completely balanced statement of Ger-

¹ *Dialektik*, ed. by Jonas, 1839; new ed., by Halpern, 1903.

² *Entwurf eines Systems der Sittenlehre*, ed. by Schweizer, 1835; abbreviated as *Grundriss der philosophischen Ethik*, ed. by Twesten, 1841.

man Idealism, writing with reference to this form of philosophy :

“ An actual summary of its whole content is nowhere to be found except in the one-sided evolutionary system of Hegel and in the *Ethics* of Schleiermacher.”¹

The fact that the *Dialectics* and the *Philosophical Ethics* have hardly been studied in England at all, would appear to be the cause that has produced a wrong perspective in the common apprehension of Schleiermacher.

What, then, is the relation of Schleiermacher's theory of religious experience, as expounded in the *Speeches on Religion* and in *The Christian Faith*, to the metaphysical doctrine, established in the *Dialectics*, and developed into its consequences in the *Ethics*?

We saw in the first chapter, that Schleiermacher's psychology of religion was summed up in two phrases. In the

¹ *Realenencyclopaedie für protestantische Theologie und Kirche*, vol. viii, p. 613.

Speeches on Religion it is said, that it is neither knowledge nor action, but is intuition and feeling. In *The Christian Faith* it is said, that it is a special determination of feeling—it is the feeling of absolute dependence. Behind this psychology there is a complete metaphysic, which is clearly indicated, when in the *Speeches* the religious intuition is defined as an “intuition of the Whole,”¹ and is not lost sight of in *The Christian Faith*, when religion is identified with a feeling of absolute dependence.

This metaphysic is fully stated in the *Dialectics*. It is founded on the fact, that in our experience we are continually passing over between two different attitudes to the world. In the first attitude, which is that of knowledge, we take our tune from the world, we are determined by it. In the second attitude, which is that of action, we set out to impose our own tune on the world, we seek to

¹ In the first edition. See Otto's reprint, 1906, p. 32.

determine it. How is it possible for us, asks Schleiermacher, to interchange these attitudes, so fundamentally opposed in their nature? It is only possible, he replies, if there be a *null point*, an attitude towards the world, in which we, recollected into the root of our own being, are momentarily one with the world in the root of its being.

Our attitude in knowing the world is sustained by a deep sense of harmony with it, which appears in the fundamental conviction that our knowledge is not a picture painted upon air, is not a mere illusion or imagination, but truly puts us in relation with the world, at least in one essential aspect. So also is it with our attitude in action, which at its highest level is ethical action, and is governed by the feeling of absolute obligation. We never could act, we could not even resolve to act, were we not upheld by the fundamental belief that in acting we are in harmony with the very soul of things, and

are sustained by the power which also sustains the universe.

Isolate, then, this feeling of conviction or belief, which both in knowledge and action appears as the ground of our security in them. It is a feeling of oneness with the universe, a feeling which never leaves us, though now we know and are determined by the universe, and now again we act and determine it. What is this feeling for itself alone, not merely as it is abstracted from our experience of knowing and doing, but as it is in its own essential nature? Does it never appear by itself, or of itself, in the human soul?

The answer is, that it does so appear. It is manifested in religion, which is nothing but a feeling of absolute dependence upon the Ground of the Universe. It is the feeling of assurance or security, which lies at the bottom of our whole life, and on which our true happiness depends. As Schleiermacher develops the idea in his book, *The Christian*

Faith, if this feeling has free play it brings to us infinite happiness ; but if it is so hindered and hampered by the finite details of our experience, that it ceases to control them, the suppression creates in us infinite unrest and dissatisfaction.

Schleiermacher's *Ethics* adds to the above fundamental principles the following important points. The whole structure of our experience is determined by the fundamental unity that has been described. Nevertheless actual experience exists in contrasted aspects, two of which are theoretical and two of which are practical. On the theoretical side, we have a form of symbolizing the world which is universal—this is Science ; there is also a form of symbolizing the world which is individual—this is Art. On the practical side, there is a form of organizing the world which is universal—this is ethical action in the State ; we have also a form of organizing the world which is individual—this is free social intercourse, to which,

as we see, Schleiermacher attached unusual value.

There are, then, these four different forms of activity in the Universe, of which ethical action in the State forms one. But again, the whole scheme with its quadruple division falls under the notion of ethical action in a wider sense. For Science, Art, the State and Fellowship, are all aspects of the highest good, the great end of human action, which is realized in the interdependent working of all these contrasted forms of experience.

And now there emerges a point of very great importance. While the ideas of the *Ethics* are founded upon those so brilliantly set forth in the *Dialectics*, we see that nevertheless the whole scheme has received a new orientation, through its application to concrete experience. The notion which has now become dominant is that of the highest good, or, in other words, the view of the world has become *teleological*. The notion of the universe as

the unity implied by knowledge and action and discerned in religious feeling, gives place to the idea of the world as an ever developing unity of Nature and Reason. Nature means the development, so far as it has gone. Reason points the way of further development towards the end, which is the highest good.

This end, however, can be described in many ways. Science, Art, the State and Fellowship—all the different forms of the unification of the universe are mutually involved and interrelated, and all are aspects of the highest good. Hence the latter can be described in terms of any or all of them. It can be viewed as absolute knowledge, as it was by the Greeks. It can be regarded as civilization and the development of the State, as it has been by the moderns. It can again be represented by the artistically minded as the free development of personality. All these descriptions contain truth. But the highest notion of all is that of the Kingdom of

God, as including indeed both complete knowledge and complete mastery of the world, but realizing both through the full development of individual spirits.

Such then were the metaphysical conceptions, which formed the background of Schleiermacher's philosophy of religion and saved it from being a mere psychology. The tendency represented by the great names of the subsequent development described in the previous chapter, Ritschl, Kaftan and James, is to dis sever the psychology of religion, more or less completely, from this metaphysical background. The consequence is, that the psychological development represents both advance and retrogression. An advance in the psychology of religion itself is not to be denied; but this does not compensate for the loss of the great metaphysical tradition, which formed the basis of Schleiermacher's whole theory. Separated from it, the psychology of religion can never be more than a curious study of

human idiosyncrasies. Well did Munsterberg say, "The way to psychology must proceed from philosophy."¹ Psychology is good, but psychologism, or the attempt to view all things psychologically apart from metaphysic, is unsatisfying and misleading.

When Ritschl and the Ritschlians proclaimed the watchword, "Theology without metaphysics," they were in fact side-tracking religion, though it was the last thing they meant to do. When James sought to substitute for theology a psychology of the religious experience, and for a metaphysical apologetic of religion a justification of it by the pragmatic test, he also was turning religion into a side-track. All sorts of things work, good and bad : what is the proof that religion works rightly? This question can only be answered, if we have a criterion by which to judge ; and that means that we must truly know, what is the highest good

¹ *Grundzüge der Psychologie*, vol. i, p. 1.

actually to be realized in the universe. We cannot get away from metaphysic, unless we are to turn religion into folly.

What is the conclusion for us in our present circumstances from all this discussion? It has been established, firstly that no psychology of religion can ever safeguard us against the fear that religion is illusion, unless it passes over, first, into an epistemology, and, then, into a metaphysic, of religion. It has been shown, secondly, that Schleiermacher, the great founder of the modern theology of experience, never intended his method of experience to be merely psychological, but that it was equally epistemological and metaphysical. Can we go a step further; and guided not only psychologically, but also epistemologically and metaphysically by Schleiermacher, can we establish for the improved psychology of our own time a firm basis, by relating it to the ultimate principles of thought and being? This is what we are now to see.

III. *The Constellation of the Great Values*

We must begin with the origin of religion at the level of the practical life, before the Great Values, that are ultimately to guide man's course in the world, have as yet arisen upon his spiritual horizon. Man at this level knows in order to act. If it were not that he is perpetually balked in his action by the processes of nature or by the action of his own fellows, religion, founded though it be upon a natural instinct of reverence for what is above him, could hardly arise within him. It is man's extremity that becomes God's opportunity. Religion becomes effective, first of all, in the hope of salvation or deliverance. Such is its beginning in actual experience.

At this stage, however, no experience is as yet related to the ultimate grounds of thought and being. Theory is limited to what serves practice, while practice itself

is confined to what serves instant and near occasions. Æsthetic feeling at this level is but expressed in the unnecessary decoration of some useful object ; and religion, similarly, is limited in its scope to the expectation and realization of the Divine help in the common occurrences of life.

All this is altered, when, sooner or later, each of these spheres of life stretches itself out to the Infinite. We need not here attempt to follow out the successive changes, by which this development takes place. In the end theory develops into a world-embracing knowledge, whose value is not in its practical utility, but in itself. Practice comes under the ethical norm, whether this be construed as the absolute obligation of a law or as the absolute desirability of the highest good. Æsthetic feeling develops into the enjoyment of the beautiful and the sublime in natural objects, and into the creation of artistic objects, which even more completely provoke the same absolutely disinterested

enjoyment. And what becomes of religion? It is still a quest for the Saving God, but the salvation that is sought, altogether transcends mere help from God in troubles of material or social origin. What is sought, is above all joy in union with God Himself, a life in Him, that partakes of His own eternity.

How matchlessly is this climax of religious feeling expressed in the Psalter, that treasury of religion pure and undefiled! Two classical passages in particular may be recalled. The first is from the fourth Psalm, a beautiful expression of joy amidst adversity :

“ Many there be that say, Who will show us any good ?
 Lord, lift Thou up the light of Thy countenance upon us ;
 Thou hast put gladness in my heart,
 More than they have, when their corn and their wine are
 increased.” ¹

The second passage is from the seventy-third Psalm, a brooding meditation, that

¹ Ps. iv, 6, 7.

wins its way through doubt and uncertainty to utter joy and triumph :

“ Whom have I in heaven but Thee ?

And there is none on earth that I desire beside Thee.

My flesh and my heart faileth,

But God is the strength of my heart and my portion for ever.” ¹

St. Augustine expressed his religion in these words, and so did Luther. They are truly the outpouring of the deeps of the soul, calling to the answering deep in God.

What, then, are we to say of the position of religion at this stage, with respect to the other Great Values, that have emerged from the first narrowly practical life of man ? Four Great Values there are, like the four stars of the constellation of the Southern Cross ; but how are they related to one another ? Are they four co-equal powers, mutually supplementary, but each independent of the rest ? Or is there a central luminary, about which the others,

¹ Ps. lxxiii, 25, 26.

suns though they be, revolve in dependence and governed order ?

Let us first enumerate the Values, and see more precisely what they are. We have the Value of Truth, upon which all our knowledge of nature depends. It functions in our objective science, as the law of the uniformity of nature. It is the principle that, whatever nature may be in detail, as a whole it is a system. All our science falls inside this principle, and nothing can finally be admitted as real for science that does not conform to it.

We have next the Value of the Supreme Good, which is the great end of human endeavour. From it all particular objects and aims of action draw their legitimation : apart from, or opposed to it, they are to be accounted null and even evil.

Then we have the Value of Beauty, that secret and mysterious harmony in things, whether the works of nature or of man, which gives us absolute, though it may be fleeting pleasure. With Beauty is to be

taken the complementary Value of the Sublime, which appears when by good hap we derive from things an elevation of spirit, which goes beyond their natural and apparent power. The Beautiful and the Sublime are not to be taken as separate values, but as distinct phases of the one Æsthetic Value, which in general we may refer to by the title of the Beautiful.

Finally, there is the Value expressed in religion, and so wonderfully illustrated in the passages, just now quoted from the Psalms. We may call this Value the Divine, or following the recent example of Otto, we may call it the Holy. It is experienced in the feeling of joy, or absolute elevation of spirit, that comes from union with a Transcendent Reality, which is, so it is felt, the deepest thing in the universe.

Such are the Values : how are they related ? The theory, which is here to be advanced, is a development of ideas to be found in the *Dialectics* and *Ethics* of

Schleiermacher. It is that the True and the Good have their unity in the Holy. It is, further, that the Holy is the power, which perpetually by a gradual evolution brings about a harmony between the True and the Good. The True, as we have it at any moment, is not yet the Good ; but it is in process of becoming the Good. The Good, again, at any moment transcends the True ; but, equally, it is in process of being realized into the True. Thus the Holy, as the common root of both the True and the Good, is constantly bringing the two into harmony with each other.

But what again is this harmony, taken in and by itself? Abstracted from the Values of the True and the Good, which are harmonized in it, it is the Beautiful. The closely connected Value of the Sublime is an evidence, that the root of Æsthetic Value also is in the Divine or Holy ; though it is not the Holy, it naturally suggests it.

We arrive, then, finally, at the position that the Holy is the fundamental ground of the Universe, from which as various aspects of its Being, the True, the Good, and the Beautiful are all derived. It is the central luminary : they are the dependent suns. The constellation of the Values centres in the Holy ; and is expanded in the True, the Beautiful and the Good.

IV. *The Holy as the Common Root of the True and the Good*

The above general statement of our theory is only an outline, and requires expansion and development. In the first place, then, we have the universe viewed as the True. This includes the whole of what science has to teach us about the facts of the world ; but it includes more. It includes that fundamental conviction of the unity and uniformity of nature, which enables us to produce any kind of science at all.

Our actual science, indeed, exhibits

gaps. We have islands of assured knowledge in the midst of the ocean of the unknown. But the conviction of the unity and uniformity of the world enables us, at least in thought, to cross the distances between one island and another, and to envisage the world as one. Or, a better illustration is to think of a solution in crystallization. We have the formation of crystals, here and there emerging out of the liquid mass. But because the solution is one and the same, the crystals obey one and the same law, so that we foresee the joining of the gaps, and the completion of the whole upon a uniform scheme.

These are, of course, only illustrations of the way in which science goes to work ; but they represent the truth, that everywhere it seeks continuity, uniformity, and unity. It obtains as much unity as it can, and the serried masses of empirical facts fall into ranks and squadrons, with an ultimate prospect of becoming in fact, as they already are in idea, one army.

But now, once more, we can look at the world from the point of view of the Good. Here the notion of what is, gives place to the notion of what ought to be. Overarching the *terra firma* of the known and the ocean of the unknown alike, is the firmament of the Ideal. From this point of view, what is, is nothing complete in itself, but is only material for what ought to be. We work and strive, taking the world we know as our basis, endeavouring always to bring into being and realize the world of our highest dreams and aspirations, the world of the Good.

How is it possible for these two views of the world to hold together? From the one standpoint the world appears given and static. Things are what they are, and it is impossible for any thing to be another thing. This is the view of realism, the view of all those who talk about hard or brute facts, who speak of accepting the universe, and of the folly of idealism. To all this the view from the other standpoint is frankly

opposed. From this point of view all that is, appears unsatisfactory, and must be transformed. It is not that which is, but that which ought to be, that is determinative. The ideal is more, and is greater than the real, whose only duty is to be its servant and minister.

The two views seem to be starkly opposed, just as the realists and the idealists are opposed in actual life. Yet both views have their grounds within us. Everyone of us is by turns a realist, seeking knowledge of the facts, and an idealist, striving beyond them. Unless there is a reconciliation, there must be a dissolution of our being. Our knowledge will be haunted by the ghosts of the ideals we have sought to suppress, and our ideals will be paralysed by the spectre of the knowledge, that appears to disallow them, and forever prevent them being realized.

Schleiermacher in his *Ethics* finds the solution of the antinomy in the idea of evolution. It is one of the master-ideas

of our time. It goes back originally to Aristotle with his biological view of the world. It was taken up by the post-Kantian idealism, and is a leading thought in the philosophy of Hegel. It forms the central motive of Schleiermacher's *Ethics*, just as the notion of the ultimate Identity of the True and the Good is the dominant conception of his *Dialectics*.

The *Dialectics* asserts that experience is impossible, unless there be a point, where the receptivity of knowledge and the activity of moral conduct come together. That point is declared to be in religious feeling, which mirrors the fundamental Unity of the True and the Good, which unity it makes known to us as the Divine.

The *Ethics* goes on to show how this Unity not only is the transcendent ground of the Universe, but also constitutes its immanent life as a teleological process. This process is the evolution, by which the True, as we at present know it, is converted into the Good, that transcends it. It is, to

describe it in another way, the process by which the Good, that is not, is realized and embodied in the True, that is. The developing True perpetually more and more becomes the Good, while the end of the process is that the whole Good becomes the True. The aspects are divided, that there may be progress ; but in the end they are united, and become one.

It is most important to see exactly what is involved in this reconciliation. Evolution is here, strictly speaking, a metaphysical rather than a scientific concept, as indeed it always is, when the word possesses a real meaning. The last thing that it means is the strict mathematical consequence in time of that which is already accepted as True ; so that indeed " all is given " ¹ from the first, and could be foreseen by a sufficiently gifted calculator. What is meant, rather is, that fresh " emergents " perpetually appear

¹ The " tout est donné," which Bergson so strenuously opposes.

amid the existing True, and modify it in the direction of the Good. This is possible, because the empirical content gathered up by science under the Value of Truth, does not wholly fill out this Value, but on the contrary leaves room for the inflow of fresh elements from the Holy, as the Source of the entire Universe, past, present and future.

V. The Beautiful and the Other Values

So far we have been working out anew and in a modern way, what is implied in the religious metaphysic of Schleiermacher. We must now transcend his point of view, in order to include in our scheme the fourth Value, which is the Beautiful. How is this related to the Holy, the Good, and the True? The Holy is the transcendent Root, alike of the Good and of the True, and is the ground of the whole evolutionary process, by which the two are united. The reason, why the present True does not satisfy us, is because of its imperfection. So far as in any part, or in

any measure, the True is perfected, just so far it becomes harmonious. What, however, is the harmonious True but the Beautiful?—while the suggestion, which the present True makes to us, of a harmony beyond its power to make manifest, is no other than the Sublime.

It is just here, that there emerges the distinction of the Beautiful from the True and from the Good. Our moral life is an endeavour after harmony ; we strive to harmonize, that is, to beautify the existing order of things, alike without and within. But sometimes we find as a pure gift, altogether apart from our stir or our endeavour, elements in the existing order, which are harmonious in themselves. Some men, too, have the gift of creating natural objects, which have this harmonious character : these are artists, and their creations are works of art. The harmonies, thus given to us by Nature or by Art, are felt as Beauty. They are not perceived either as true or good, but simply as *beautiful*.

It is only *metaphysically* that we can say, that the Beautiful is the harmony of the True and the Good. It appears within Nature, either by the spontaneity of Nature itself or the spontaneity of Art, and so far it has relation to the True. It is also akin to the Good for which we strive, in so far as it is a harmony transcending the common course of Nature. Yet when we experience the Beautiful, we do not experience the True or the Good : these disappear in favour of the harmony, which is all that fills our mind.

This matter of the relation of the Beautiful to the True and to the Good may be still further illuminated. Let us, firstly, consider the relation of the Beautiful to the Good. Kant expresses in his own way the doctrine just stated, when he says, that Beauty consists in "purposefulness without purpose."¹ It is the kind of thing we seek with conscious endeavour, but it is given to us without our endeavour.

¹ "Zweckmässigkeit ohne Zweck."

This is true, whether we contemplate beauty in Nature or in Art. The toil of the craftsman, as Croce has well observed, is not, strictly speaking, æsthetic activity : it is practical activity in producing the objects of æsthetic contemplation. The original ideal of the craftsman, which he tries to express in stone or on canvas, in tones or in words, is as much given to him, as it is given to us who enjoy the work of art, or as indeed the beauty of Nature is given to us all.

So much for the relation of the Beautiful to the Good : let us look, secondly, at its relation to the True. The Beautiful, though *metaphysically* it may be constituted by the unity of the Good and the True, is no more *immediately* the True, than it is *immediately* the Good. This is well expressed in the German phrase, that speaks of the *schöne Schein*, the beautiful appearance : the meaning is, that the Beautiful rather appears than is. When we contemplate the Beautiful, the question of its

existence no more arises, than that of its satisfying desire. Just as our pleasure in the Beautiful is entirely disinterested, so also our contemplation of it is altogether apart from any concern about the reality of what we contemplate. Beauty seems to live in an ideal world, remote from the changes of earth. Though given to us in time, and thus transient in character, it is yet independent of time, in a way that neither the increasing truth nor the slowly realized good can be. No one has expressed this fact more powerfully than Keats, that pure lover of beauty. He has no more famous line, than that in which the pursuing youth and the pursued nymph are rent from reality, and consecrated as a joy for ever.

“For ever wilt thou love and she be fair.”

The moment of beauty is seized, and held for perennial and disinterested contemplation.

Thirdly, as we have sought further to

explore the relation of the Beautiful to the True and to the Good, let us try to investigate more fully its relation to the Holy. This is one of the most difficult points in the doctrine of the interrelation of the Values. For the Beautiful and the Holy are each of them metaphysically the unity of the True and the Good, but *in a different way*. It is this precise difference that requires illumination. In general, the difference is that the Holy is the Source, whence the True and the Good divide, while the Beautiful is the harmony, in which they reunite.

The Holy is the One Transcendent Ground of the Universe, which makes possible the very coexistence of the True and the Good. But the Beautiful is a manifestation of the unity of the True and the Good, in the form of a harmony, arising out of the midst of the True, and answering to our endeavour after the Good. Yet this harmony does not proceed from our endeavour, but is given to us

without it. Neither is it explicable from the principles of the True, but it rises spontaneously out of its midst. What, then, is the ground of this harmony, this reunion of the True and the Good, in which both disappear? Answering the question metaphysically, what ground can we assign to it but the Holy?

The Beautiful is, then, to be regarded metaphysically as a manifestation of the underlying Unity, but *in another form*. It is an *indirect* manifestation of the Holy. We recognize the Holy, which is the Transcendent Unity of the True and the Good, only indirectly in the Beautiful.

VI. *The Holy as mirrored in Religious Experience*

Is there no more direct manifestation of the Holy as the underlying Unity of the Universe? Is there no way in which it can be revealed as the synthesis of the True and the Good, so that each, while it is subordinated to a Higher Unity, is

not lost sight of, but remains in evidence, even though it be modified by its association with the higher principle. It will now be claimed, that we have in religious experience precisely that *direct* manifestation of the Holy, which we are seeking ; and further, that religious experience can be shown to reveal the Holy, as the One Ground, not only of the True and the Good, but of the Beautiful also. If we can establish this we shall have achieved *the metaphysical justification of religion*.

Our aim is to show, that religion, when metaphysically understood, is a synthesis of the True and the Good, not only in their common Ground, which is the Holy or Divine, but also in their resulting harmony, which, in and for itself, is the Beautiful, but, as it appears in religion, is subordinated to the Holy, just as are the True and the Good. The True, the Good and the Beautiful thus all appear as changing phases of the manifestation of One and the Same Supreme Unity. It will be

argued, that religious experience is precisely that form of experience, in which, when it is analysed in accordance with the best modern psychology, these things come clearly to view.

What we have now to do, is to see, how all the four Great Values are manifested in the experience of religion. Religion, psychologically considered, we have already found to centre in the experiences of God and of salvation. God, metaphysically conceived, is the Holy, which is at once the Abiding Ground of the True or Real, and the active principle of its evolution towards the Good. These two aspects of the Divine Being appear in religious experience in the conceptions of creation and providence respectively.

But what is the religious equivalent of that harmony of the True and the Good, which we have recognized as the Beautiful? In what form does the Beautiful enter into religion? It may be suggested, that its religious equivalent is to be found in the

experience of salvation, which is a harmony of the True and the Good, understood, however, not as arising inexplicably and spontaneously in the world-process, but as being brought about by God—the end of His ways with men.

It is important here to avoid mistake. It is not meant, that the True, the Good and the Beautiful appear in religion in their own nature, as they do in science, in ethical action and in æsthetic contemplation. But they have recognizable equivalents: they appear in religion in such a way as to disclose their *metaphysical synthesis*. The religious knowledge of the world as the creation of God is not science. Religious belief in God's providence is not ethical action. The enjoyment of the Divine salvation is not æsthetic contemplation. Yet religion is the one form of experience, in which we are able so to rise to the Ground of the Universe, as intuitively to discern the unity of all its varied aspects, and to see,

how the Great Values, that divide experience, may be synthesized in one single view of the world.

It is in the history of salvation that the synthesis is experientially realized. The history of salvation is the history of God's activity in the world, through the discord of what is and what ought to be, towards their final harmony and reconciliation. It is a history of many deliverances, of many a harmony of the True and the Good. But those harmonies are no longer experienced, as they are in æsthetic contemplation, as spontaneous births from the world-process, each alone in and for itself a single moment of perfection. They are instead always traced to the Divine activity that brings them about, and are never thought of, except in the closest conjunction with it.

Thus religion is never merely a feeling of absolute dependence. It includes also a moment of knowledge and a moment of activity, subordinated to the feeling and

bound together by it. There is in religion, not only a belief in the reality of God, but also a longing for His salvation, which, even if it be satisfied in part, strains beyond all present enjoyment to a satisfaction still fuller and richer, to a pure joy in God and in the final harmony of His universe.

The history of salvation is therefore a teleological process. It is just here most of all that the harmony of the True and the Good under God's guidance, differs from that other harmony of them, that we call the Beautiful. Beauty is the harmony of the True and the Good with no conscious reference to either. Hence the moments of beauty, which the world presents, are individual, and each is complete in itself. Ancient forms of beauty may indeed contribute to the creation of new forms of beauty, but there is no strict teleology in the process. The sovereign power of the artist utilizes elements from the past to create out of them something

new. Beauty has a non-recurrent character. Each point of beauty is like a star in the nightly firmament, single and lonely, shining by its own radiance.

But with the history of salvation in the world it is different. Each divine manifestation within the True, in answer to men's longings for the Good, forms a part of a chain of events leading onwards to the final salvation. At present indeed we cannot see the connexion of every such manifestation with the final result. Some lines of advance are more or less clear. Others seem to pause, or even to lose themselves in nothingness. Still, there is enough connexion visible, to help us to believe in its universal presence, as our theory requires. The movement of the world as a whole is from God as Source to God as Salvation. It is just because we are finite and imperfect, that we cannot yet see the whole motion of the tremendous process.

CHAPTER III

CONFIRMATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE METAPHYSIC

I. *Recapitulation of the Previous Argument*

THIS final chapter has to gather up the results of the previous two, and round them out, if possible, to a satisfactory conclusion.

In the first chapter it was observed, that at the present time it was becoming more and more usual to base theological doctrines upon an immediate appeal to religious experience. It was further shown, that the scientific development of this appeal led us at once to the psychology of religion, which has done so much in recent times to throw light upon the nature of religious experience.

So far, so good. But it was also shown,

that all this modern appeal to experience and this psychological treatment of religion had a weak side. It lies exposed to the doubt, whether, after all, religious experience is of the nature of an illusion. Is not the psychology of religion in reality only a pathological study of the way in which human desires are projected upon the unknown, and are objectified by the will to live, which is so strong in all of us ?

It was argued, accordingly, that to assure the position of religion in the world and validate the claim to reality, which itself is a part of religious experience, we must construct a metaphysic of religion. In other words, we must connect religious experience with that unity of thought and being, which is the final presupposition of our experience in general. What can be thus connected, is truly real ; what cannot, must ultimately be dismissed as illusory.

The second chapter set out to show how such a connexion was possible. It was

observed, that our experience is pervaded by a fundamental antinomy.

On the one hand, we regard the world as the True. All the propositions of science are accepted as truth, and are regarded as referring to reality, because they belong to a unity, whose ultimate principle is the uniformity of nature. Under this aspect the world appears as the given, we find what is.

Yet, on the other hand, we equally regard the same world as the sphere of conduct, the supreme end of which, when it is sufficiently considered, is seen to be the Good. This view of things implies the plasticity of the world. It requires the possibility of its transformation in accordance with the principle of the Ideal.

It was argued, that no world-unity is possible without a reconciliation of these two conflicting views. Reference was then made to the related suggestions of the *Dialectics* and of the *Ethics* of Schleiermacher, in which sound and sufficient

principles of such reconciliation appeared to be set forth.

The *Dialectics* sought the Unity of the True and the Good in a common Root of both, which was manifested in religious feeling. Religion, said Schleiermacher, relates itself to the world, neither as matter of knowledge, nor as sphere of action. In distinction from these one-sided aspects of the universe, religious feeling reflects that absolute Unity of the whole, which is the Ground of the differences.

In the *Ethics* Schleiermacher went on to show how this Ground of Unity could realize itself in our changing experience, as we alternately view the world as the True, and then review it from the standpoint of the Good. The view and the review are both possible, if we accept the history of the world as an evolution in which the True steadily becomes the Good, while the Good correspondingly is realized as the True. It is only because of the imperfection of our experience, that the

two aspects of the universe are divided. The ultimate tendency of both is to unite. Such a union of both would be a world wholly true, which because it was also wholly good, would be entirely harmonious and perfect.

This thought of harmony led us to include the Beautiful also in our scheme of things. We recognized in the moments of beauty which the world presents to us, whether in nature or in art, a form of experience, in which the harmony of the True and the Good perpetually manifests itself in isolated flashes from the soul of the universe. But though this form of experience may be metaphysically explained as the union of the True and the Good, it is altogether different from, and independent of both. Nor does it immediately contain any reference to that ultimate Unity whence Beauty flows, except in so far as this is suggested in the complementary experience of the Sublime.

It was finally claimed, that what is

experienced in this divided way as the True, the Good and the Beautiful, was experienced in religion as One and Whole. Religion contains in its own peculiar way a synthesis of the True, the Good and the Beautiful, through the added recognition of the Holy or Divine. This is the *Value of Values*, whence the other Values flow, and in the experience of which their synthesis is experienced. In religion they do not appear, but are subordinated. They are indeed transformed, but they are not lost. They are not transformed out of all recognition.

To establish this important point, appeal was made to religious experience itself. It was argued, that the world as the True in its evolution towards the Good, when considered religiously in relation to the Divine, gave us our faith in creation and in providence. Again, the world, so far as it is a harmony of the True and the Good, viewed in itself is the world as the Beautiful; but, when it is religiously

interpreted through the Holy, it yields the experience and hope of salvation. Salvation is that harmony, which is realized both as True in itself and as satisfying the ideal of the Good, but which is given to us, not of our own effort or work, but as the direct operation of the Divine.

To sum up, religious experience presents the completest view of the world in all regards, and sets us at that central point of view, where its many contrasted aspects find their synthesis.

II. *A Confirmation from the Constitution and Course of Nature*

The above summary shows that our metaphysical justification of religion has already reached a certain completeness. The best way further to elucidate and confirm it would seem to be by attempting to answer some obvious objections.

The most general objection will probably be that the doctrine is too speculative. This generation is certainly less afraid of

speculation, than was the generation before it ; as indeed such philosophies as those of Alexander and Whitehead bear witness. Nevertheless, speculation is still in many quarters an object of distrust. There are those who prefer to keep to the empirical sciences, including psychology, where there are plenty of facts, and all that is required is to arrange and interpret them.

Yet, if science has any purpose beyond mere material and technical applications ; if it is guided by the ideal of Truth, and values the True even more than the useful, we are at once committed to another view of things than the purely empirical. A speculation founded on the criticism of experience is not an arbitrary or fantastic creation of the mind ; but is that to which due reflection on experience itself compels us.

There is no need, therefore, to apologize for speculating. Though speculation is by its very nature precarious, yet specula-

tion of some kind seems inevitable. Even a faulty piece of work may still be suggestive, and may hope for correction by other and better speculation.

The general objection to the speculative character of our metaphysic naturally particularizes itself into a number of different individual objections. The first of these will be that it is based upon values and not upon facts. Does such speculation, it may be asked, bear any relation to the facts of Nature and History? Is it possible to find any confirmation of it from what Butler called the constitution and course of Nature?

This is a demand for the shifting of the court of appeal from the *a priori* to the *a posteriori*. The first reply to it must be to point out, that any verdict of approval upon our theory from such a court can only be a confirmation of a secondary character.

A metaphysic can never rest merely upon facts, but *only upon facts as valued*.

The very starting-point for metaphysical discussions must be to recognize with Kant, that, paradoxical as it may seem, there are elements in experience which transcend experience. Such elements are the Values, concerning which our argument has been hitherto. They are the ultimate and universal grounds of Thought and Being, to which experience must be related, if it is to be anchored upon certainty and reality.

All this is, not only to be admitted, but also to be firmly maintained. Nevertheless, we cannot rest with so short an answer to the objection that has been advanced. If the true basis of Metaphysic is facts as valued, then we cannot avoid the appeal to facts. We can only avoid a crude and unintelligent form of it.

The relative justification for the appeal is to be found in a certain logical priority, that exists among the Values themselves. The Great Values of the True, the Good, the Beautiful and the Holy, all exist to

colligate and unify in different ways the empirical material, which is given to us moment by moment. In this way there arise the concrete worlds of Science, Ethics, Æsthetics and Religion. If our previous argument gave *metaphysical priority* to Religion, as the fullest and deepest manifestation in experience of the World-Unity, nevertheless we have to admit that the world of Truth possesses *logical priority* over those of the other Values.

Ethical judgments, æsthetic judgments and religious judgments, all presuppose judgments of existence, which belong to the sphere of Truth. We praise or blame an act that has been done, or can be done ; we should not praise or blame an act, were such possible, that had no relation to the sphere of Truth and Reality. Similarly, it is existent facts, either of Nature, or of Art, which is Nature refashioned by men, that we value æsthetically. And it is in connexion with the actual facts of Nature and History, which is the special sphere

within Nature of human activity, that our religious judgments take their rise. As regards their origin at any rate, all other modes of judgment seem to depend upon the theoretic judgment. A peculiar value, therefore, will attach to any confirmation of our metaphysical theory, that can be found in the facts of Nature and History. Such a confirmation will mean, that the conclusions we have reached concerning the ground-plan of the Universe, find a measure of support in that actual knowledge of its details, which forms the starting-point of all our other and, it may be, richer forms of experience.

There appears to be the necessary evidence for the support of our metaphysic, in the *teleological order*, in which the different levels of Nature and History stand to one another. At the basis of the whole structure is the physical level, constituted in its essence by matter or electrical charges, the whole being in motion under laws, which it is the work of mathematical

physics to develop. Closely connected with this physical level is the world of chemistry, which a while ago seemed altogether distinct from it, but which modern physical chemistry is seeking to bring, as far as may be, within its ambit. How far it is to be reckoned as a separate level of existence, is therefore at present in doubt.

When, however, we come to the level of life, there can be no doubt, that we come to something new. A living organism is a unity, in a way in which no physical aggregate, or even chemical combination, is a unity. However much physics and chemistry can do towards explaining the inner operations of such an organism, biology is driven in the end to finalist or quasi-finalist modes of treatment, which show clearly enough, that a new element has emerged within nature.

Distinct again from the level of life, and undoubtedly to be placed above it, is the level of consciousness, as it emerges

in the animal world, and forms the basis of human mentality. Higher still, and emerging in man alone, is the level of reflective consciousness, at which appear the Great Values, which have been our principal theme.

It is impossible to overlook the teleology implied in the relation of these several levels of nature. Their order is both logical, and according to the evidence of astronomy and geology, also historical, in the broad sense of the word. In spite of the physical greatness of the universe and the physical littleness of man, in so far as he is the bearer of the Great Values, he appears as the highest point of the series.

It may be objected, that the above attempt to confirm our metaphysic from the constitution and course of Nature fails in the end, since the same Nature that produces man also destroys him. Moreover, even if we extend our view to take in the history of the human race as a whole,

science may hold out a prospect of its lasting yet upon the earth for millions of years, nevertheless in the end it can promise nothing but the final annihilation of humanity, as the sun loses its heat by radiation into space, and the earth grows too cold any longer to support human life.

Certainly, then, we must not expect too much of the argument from Nature. From the point of view of Natural Science, even the Values themselves are simply facts that originate in human beings, and even their absolute claims are only psychological facts, whose mere existence does not safeguard them against destruction along with the psycho-physical organism, which is their bearer. The argument from Nature can never be more than a propædæutic. In the end there must be a *μετάβασις εἰς ἄλλο γένος*. We must pass to the order of the Values, and regard them, not from the outside, as we do, when we consider them as nature-products, but rather according to their own intrinsic

quality. It is only then that we see, that Nature has produced something which transcends Nature, something that belongs, not to the order of Time, but to that of Eternity.

Yet it may be urged, that the argument from Nature is not ineffective. It cannot indeed convince a man, who deliberately rejects the claims of the Great Values to absoluteness. But it can prepare the way for the recognition of the Values, with all that is involved in such recognition. And even when we have committed ourselves deliberately to a Metaphysic of Value, it can prevent us from feeling that we have severed all connexion with the world of scientific facts.

It was said by the mediæval schoolmen, that Nature contained only the footprints of God, whereas His image was imprinted on the human mind. We may develop the statement to suit our present argument, and say that only vestiges of the Divine are to be seen in Nature, including man

himself as a psycho-physical organism ; while the Divine image shines as a triple light in the Values of Truth, Goodness and Beauty ; and the Divine or Holy, the Root of all other Values, is Itself revealed to us in the experience of religion.

III. *The Practical Problem of Life demands a Speculative Solution*

A second form of objection to the speculative character of our Metaphysic of Religion may be, that in building upon the Values, it confounds the solution of the practical problem of life with that of the theoretical problem of the unity of the Values. The answer to this objection is to admit, that the solution of the two problems has indeed been treated as one and the same, but to say that this involves no confusion. There is no sufficient solution of the practical problem of life apart from that of the theoretical problem of the unity of the Values.

Nevertheless, the objection is inevitable, and must be fully met. For, what is the practical problem of life? It is to adjust ourselves to our environment. The mark, that the necessary adjustment has been achieved, is the feeling of pleasure. Now, it is possible to make that pleasure, that subjective resonance itself our end, and to make our whole life a search for pleasure. Such a search need not always take an ignoble form.

Consider, for example, the expression given to it in Pater's famous "Conclusion" to his volume of essays on the Renaissance. Pater declares, that the Universal is only of service, so far as it stimulates us to find satisfaction in the particular. He writes :

"The service of philosophy, of speculative culture towards the human spirit, is to rouse, to startle it to a life of constant and eager observation. Every moment some form grows perfect in hand or face ; some tone on the hills or the sea is choicer than the rest ; some mood of passion or

insight or intellectual excitement is irresistibly real and attractive to us—for that moment only. Not the fruit of experience, but experience itself, is the end. A counted number of pulses only is given to us of a variegated, dramatic life. How may we see in them all that is to be seen in them by the finest senses? How shall we pass most swiftly from point to point, and be present always at the focus where the greatest number of vital forces unite in their purest energy?

“To burn always with this hard gem-like flame, to maintain this ecstasy, is success in life. . . . Philosophical theories or ideas, as points of view, instruments of criticism, may help us to gather up what might otherwise pass unregarded by us. ‘Philosophy is the microscope of thought.’ The theory or idea or system which requires of us the sacrifice of any part of this experience, in consideration of some interest into which we cannot enter, or some abstract theory we have not identified

with ourselves, or of what is only conventional, has no real claim upon us.”¹

This statement of Pater’s amounts to the assertion that the Great Values of Truth, Goodness, Beauty and Holiness, are only to be accepted in so far as they are ancillary to the ideal of happiness. Each will be no more than the hypostatization of human wants. Truth will be a useful hypothesis, goodness a profitable rule of life—“Honesty is the best policy”; beauty will be indistinguishable from simple pleasure, the Divine will be a pleasing illusion. We are back at the very challenge from which we started, only that instead of its being a challenge to religion alone, it has become a challenge to all the Great Values, that in their combination constitute the metaphysical justification of religion. How is the repeated and extended challenge to be met?

We must say, that Pater’s view mis-

¹ Pater, *The Renaissance*, ed. 1913, pp. 249 ff.

apprehends the proper character of the Values. The True, the Good, the Beautiful and the Holy, though they may and do satisfy individuals, are nevertheless in their essential nature universals. Truth is not my opinion, or your opinion, but is irrespective of all private opinion : it is the truth that all reasoning men must admit. The Good is not merely a good for me or you, but is also a good in itself, and therefore a good for all. Beauty is not just that which pleases you or me, that is matter of taste : it is that which pleases universally, and apart from any particular interest we may have in its existence. Finally, the Divine or Holy is a universal. It is That, to which we bow in absolute reverence. It is the Absolutely Transcendent, or as Otto describes it, the Altogether Other, the Awful and yet the Fascinating. It is That, which draws us into its orbit, and commands our every motion.

The search for pleasure is a denial of the power of all these universals, as they

exist in conjunction. It is a practical assertion that no world-unity exists. Life is simply a string of moments, threaded upon chaos. The art of life is to make each of these moments pleasurable in the highest degree. In its lowest form such a life will be a return to the brute from which we have sprung, only that we shall use our reason to find more easily the things that satisfy the brute. In its highest form, in which it is described by Pater, it would seem to become a one-sided pursuit of the *Æsthetic Value*, the only one of the four Great Values that can be pursued without a definite consciousness of the Whole.

The search for Truth, the endeavour after the Good, imply a consciousness, though no doubt from one side only, of the Whole. It is still plainer that the search for the Divine implies such a consciousness. But the peculiarity of æsthetic pleasure is, that it is connected with single appearances of the World-

Harmony, without reference to the World-Harmony as a Whole. Thus Pater can represent the art of life as a quest for single æsthetic pleasures, without raising the question of the harmony of the entire universe, let alone the further question of its ground and source.

What we have to decide is, if such a search for pleasure, whether on the lower or the higher level, can be a solution of the problem of life. If a man could absolutely stifle all higher aspiration within him, he might perhaps find satisfaction of a sort in the pleasures of a brute. But it can hardly be a solution of the problem of life for a human being, that he should have to deny his own reason. Or suppose, that he retains reason only as the captive and slave of the senses, simply to find food for their enjoyment, what is there to prevent reason, like Samson in the prison-house, regaining its strength, and bringing down the pillars of the whole dark temple of sensuality in the desire

for God's free air? The knight Tannhäuser in the Venusberg, wearying of its cloying delights, is a symbol of man, enslaved and yet never wholly to be enslaved by the senses.

Or, if pleasure be pursued in the higher form, that Pater has so eloquently described, is not the underlying pessimism, which forms the background of his eloquence, the sufficient proof, that no true satisfaction is to be found along these lines? Let us listen to him again :

“ While all melts under our feet, we may well grasp at any exquisite passion or any contribution to knowledge that seems by a lifted horizon to set the spirit free for a moment, or any stirring of the senses, strange dyes, strange colours, and curious odours, or work of the artist's hands, or the face of one's friend. Not to discriminate every moment some passionate attitude in those about us, and in the very brilliancy of their gifts some tragic dividing of forces on their ways, is on this short

day of frost and sun to sleep before evening.”¹

Are not Pater's own words here evidence enough of the unsatisfying nature of the satisfaction he proposes? If we attempt to satisfy the passion for Beauty, and at the same time ignore the quest for Truth, for Goodness and for Holiness, then the palace of art that we may build for ourselves will be haunted by the spectres of longings unsatisfied. Our things of beauty, instead of being a joy for ever, will pass into nothingness, and leave us with an unslaked thirst for the true Unity and Reality of the World of Values.

Of these Values, the Beautiful, though distinct from the Root-Value of the Holy, is, certainly, in some ways most akin to it. While Truth and Goodness must be the objects of an advancing quest, Beauty can be enjoyed without a thought of the future. Nevertheless it cannot be a

¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 250.

permanent substitute for the Holy. It is essentially transient : it is given to us in gleams and flashes. If it is to persist and endure, it must come to us not merely as pleasure, but as a grace, the power of which abides beyond the momentary experience—in other words, it must be *religiously* enjoyed. The joy of religion transcends æsthetic delight just because of the impermanence of the latter. How finely has St. Augustine related, and yet distinguished the two :

“ Too late I loved Thee, Beauty so old and yet so new, too late I loved Thee. And behold, Thou wast within and I without, and there I sought Thee ; and in my deformity rushed amidst those beauteous forms which Thou hadst made. . . . Thou didst call, and cry aloud, and break through my deafness. Thou didst blaze forth and shine, and dispel my blindness. Thou wast fragrant, and I drew in my breath, and pant after Thee. I tasted, and I hunger and thirst. Thou

didst touch me, and I burned for Thy peace.”¹

It is clear, then, that the practical problem of life is one with the theoretical problem of the universe, and that the two can only be solved together. Our practice must be guided, not by the desire for pleasure, but by the ideal of the Good. Our pursuit of the Good, again, must be supported through religion by a theoretical view of the world, which makes the attainment of the Good in it, not merely possible, but also actually its assured end and aim. Only when we have united our theory and our practice through the religious experience of the Holy, shall we find the true solution of the problem of life. We shall view the truth about the world as the earnest of the Good that will ultimately be true ; and with Wordsworth, we shall receive the moments of pure beauty that gladden us, even in the world as it actually is, as visitations from the

¹ St. Augustine, *Confessions*, Book X, xxvii, 38.

Most High God, and as harbingers of the glory of His final revelation.

Our metaphysic delivers us from the pessimism, that makes life at best no more than a string of bright moments poised upon a background of darkness. It does this by identifying the solution of the practical problem of life with the theoretical solution of the problem of the Values, and so overcoming the dualism which makes the pessimism inevitable. Our metaphysic serves to bind experience together in the closest possible way. Not only is individual experience universalized through its participation in the Values, but the Values themselves are unified by participation in the Holy. Our solution of the problem of the Values was found by a definite construction and combination of the four Great Values, which gave to one of the Values supremacy over the other three. The Holy is the common root of the True, the Good and the Beautiful, and is manifested in different

ways in and through them. We may change the metaphor previously used, and say, not that it is the central luminary and they dependent suns, but that it is the true Sun, and they shine by a reflection from its glory.

IV. *Defence of a Special Construction of the Values*

Just at this point there arises a third objection to our metaphysical speculation. Is it not venturesome, not to say foolhardy, to insist on a special construction of the Great Values, when the history of philosophy is strewn with the wrecks of rival constructions bearing the *imprimatur* of great, and even the greatest names? Some would say, just because of this, that any such construction can only be arbitrary, the work of an ingenious and errant fancy. The following is Croce's account of, and comment upon Vischer's notion of the proper combination of the Great Values, or what is the same thing,

the proper combination of the activities determined by them—Philosophy, the quest for Truth ; Ethics, the quest for the Good ; Art, the pursuit of Beauty ; and Religion, the search for the Holy :

“ For Vischer, Beauty belongs neither to the theoretical nor to the practical activity, but is placed in a serene sphere, superior to these antitheses ; that is to say, in the sphere of absolute Spirit, in company with Religion and Philosophy ; but in contradistinction to Hegel, Vischer assigns the first place in this sphere to Religion, the second to Art, and the third to Philosophy. Much ingenuity was devoted in those days to moving these words about like pieces on a chess-board ; it has been observed that of the possible combinations of the three terms, Art, Religion and Philosophy, four were actually adopted ; by Schelling, Philosophy, Religion, Art ; by Hegel, Art, Religion, Philosophy ; by Weisse, Philosophy, Art, Religion ; and by Vischer, Religion, Art,

Philosophy. But Vischer himself states that Wirth, author of a system of ethics, opted for the fifth combination, Religion, Philosophy, Art, which leaves us but the sixth, Art, Philosophy, Religion, unclaimed, unless (as is not improbable) some unrecognized genius seized upon it, and made it the test of his system.”¹

Croce here makes very pretty fun of the chess-board permutations of three only of the Values, that is, the True, the Beautiful and the Holy ; for these are the three that are implied by Philosophy, Art and Religion respectively. The fourth Value, the Good with its connected practical activity, Vischer has already as a preliminary, reduced to a subordinate position, along with the theoretical activity in the narrower sense of Science : he includes both Science and Ethics in Philosophy. What might Croce not have said of the twenty-four permutations possible among the whole four Values,

¹ Croce, *Aesthetic*, Eng. tr., 2nd ed., p. 337.

the True, the Good, the Beautiful and the Holy, all treated as substantial, or among the four human activities corresponding to them? Are we to conclude, that there is no certain way of establishing a relation among them, but that we are left merely to arbitrary guess and conjecture, or to the fantastic variations of chance?

If it were so, surely it would be better to adopt the view that the four Values are not interdependent and communicating, but are independent and complementary. A splendid example of this type of doctrine is to be found in the Metaphysic which concludes Volkelt's great three-volume *System of Æsthetics*.¹ Volkelt declares for the absolute equality and independence of the four Values, which, nevertheless, he says, supplement each other in their relation to human life.

Following out suggestions taken from the latter part of Schleiermacher's *Ethics*,

¹ *System der Aesthetik*, 1905-14.

Volkelt distinguishes the four Values as incorporating in their actual working in experience different measures of individuality with their universal character. The most universal form of life is the theoretic pursuit of truth, in which individuality almost disappears altogether. Next comes ethical conduct, where the individual, though subjugated to the universal, is more in evidence. Religion finds still more room for individuality, and Art most room of all. Hence the solution of the question, how the Values are interrelated, lies in the division of our lives into more universal and more individual strata, so that our experience will include an outer sphere, in which our distinction from others is hardly observable, within which will be other concentric spheres, in each of which our individuality becomes more distinctly apparent.

Finally, Volkelt would see the coherence of all these different forms of life in a

transcendent metaphysical Unity, out of which all these different aspects diverge, and into which they return, as the colours of the spectrum diverge from, and return into the one white light.

There is much in the above scheme that is suggestive, and it does, no doubt, correspond in a considerable measure to the actual mode in which our life is lived, and to the actual working of the Unity by which it is sustained. But it is unsatisfactory, that in the end the relation of the four Values should be so externally treated, as they are, when their difference is estimated merely upon the principle of a greater or less universality in the way they are experienced. It is to be urged, on the contrary, that an intrinsic relation of real intercommunication can be found between them. It has been maintained, that in the Holy we have the common root of the True, the Good and the Beautiful, and that the manifestation of the Holy in religious experience affords

the clue, as to how the separate manifestations in experience of the other three Values will ultimately become one with each other, and with the manifestation of the Holy itself.

We can do justice to Volkelt's point of view by admitting, that at present religious experience is a different thing from theoretical, ethical or æsthetical experience. It is not a direct continuation of any one of them, but stands by itself as a separate function of life. All that need be claimed is, that religious experience presents the Whole more completely than any other of the types of experience. Religion shows how the True will become the Good in an ultimate harmony of both, and it traces back all harmonies even now simply given in the experience of the Beautiful, to their Source and Root. Thus the Holy is the Ground, not only of the True and the Good, but of the Beautiful also. It is necessary, indeed, not to make the mistake of

supposing, that because the True, the Beautiful and the Good have the Holy for their Root, therefore each experience of Truth, Beauty and Goodness is in itself an experience of the Holy. But it remains true that each can lead up to an experience of the Holy.

Thus we see how to deal, not only with Volkelt's separation of the Values, but also with Croce's objection that any combination of them is arbitrary. In opposition to Volkelt, we shall say that the problem of life, and the world-problem involved in it, have not found a solution, as long as we set the Values side by side, as more or less universal or individual. We can, indeed we must, bear with the present separation of our contrasted types of experience, and with the corresponding division of our life in different directions. But we can only do so satisfactorily, if we are sustained by an insight into the way, in which experience can, and will ultimately be unified. Our inspiration is,

that though now we know in part, and we prophesy in part, yes, and in part we act ethically, and in part we enjoy beauty, when that which is perfect is come, there will be a reunion of all the Values, and that which is in part shall be done away.

And what shall we say to Croce? We shall maintain, that though the combination of the Values is not an arbitrary matter (how can it be, if there is to be one Universe?), yet it is not difficult to see, how without fundamental error each Value can be taken in its own way to be first.

The Values are related to one another, if the illustration may be allowed, as are the Persons and the Essence in the doctrine of the Trinity. The Essence is the Unity of the Persons, while the Persons are immanent in each other, yet without coalescing, either with each other, or with the Essence. Just so, the Holy is the Common Ground of the Good, the True

and the Beautiful, and each of the three is in the other two, and in the Holy also, without their coalescing.

Thus the different systems of philosophy, which relate the Values in different ways, are not wrong, but approach the construction of them from different angles. And yet there is a *central* point of view, where the construction of the Values is apprehended most truly. That central point of view is given by religion, which constitutes such an experience of the Holy, as enables the reflecting mind to see how it unifies the True, the Good and the Beautiful.

Our life is lived in a changing experience, and at different levels. We have practical moments, when it passes along on the level of perception and instinct or habit. We have others, where we are still practical, but where our practice is guided by free ideas. Finally, we have other moments of experience specifically theoretic, æsthetic, ethical or religious,

where life is lived in what Ritschl called value-judgments. The position we are maintaining, is that the moments, which most of all give us a key to the meaning of our whole life, are the religious moments. They give us, as do no others, an insight into the construction of the Universe as a whole. All our value-judgments arise by way of a reflection upon the natural perceptive and instinctive basis of life, but they reflect upon it in different ways and value it differently. There can be no settlement of the problem of life, or of that of the meaning of the Universe, until we perceive that one Value is supreme among the rest and virtually, if not actually, includes the others. In other words, it appears once more, that the Metaphysic of Religion binds our experience together, as nothing else does. It sets us at the very Fount of Being, and enables us intuitively to discern the Unity of the Great Values, and the solution of the problem of life.

V. *The Divine Personality*

Our argument has returned, from the different considerations that have been traversed, upon its central principle. Here, therefore, we might naturally make an end, except for the reminder, that quite apart from defects in the theory, which might perhaps be removed by further analysis and fuller development, there are others which are inevitable because of the subject. How could it be otherwise in an argument, that presumes to treat of what eye has not seen, nor ear heard, neither has entered into the heart of man—the Transcendent Root of the Universe? How shall any human words or concepts here be adequate?

Yet, instead of ceasing to speculate, let us venture to carry speculation a little further. There is yet one more important conclusion that may be drawn from the foregoing reflections. It is that the ultimate Unity of the Universe has its nearest

analogy in the ultimate unity of our own personality.

This is, surely, the conclusion to which Schleiermacher ought to have been led, when he viewed religion as the point of experience, that makes possible the transition from theory to practice. He did not reach the conclusion, because he defined this point of experience simply as feeling, a feeling of absolute dependence. He did, however, get near to it, when he described religion in the first edition of his *Speeches*, as a feeling and intuition of the *Whole*. In this original expression of his view it comes out clearly, that the religious attitude is not simply feeling, but is a unique union of the theoretic and the emotional attitudes. It is to be remembered that modern psychology relates the volitive attitude most closely to the emotional attitude, so that the two are often taken together in one as the emotional-volitive attitude, in opposition to the strongly contrasted theoretic attitude. It needs,

therefore, only a very little modification of Schleiermacher's position to say, that the religious attitude is a union of theory, emotion and volition all in one.

It may, indeed, be said, that this inclusion of volition is implied, when religion is described as a feeling of absolute dependence. Dependence implies more than feeling, it implies *trust*, a form of experience in which the volitive element is included. Thus we come to the result that religion is the expression of the fundamental unity of our being. We are most religious, when the different elements of our nature blend most closely into one, without that division of the personality between conflicting experiences, which is essentially the misery, from which religion saves us.

This unification of the personality comes about, as we have seen, through an insight into the Unity of the Universe, and in no other way. Is it unreasonable to infer, that what holds the diverse elements of

the Universe together in themselves, is akin to what holds them together in ourselves? We achieve personality most fully, in moments when our experience is unified and harmonized. Are we not to infer, that the Unity of the Universe, which manifests itself to us in such moments, has its nearest analogy in our own momentarily unified personality?

Or cannot we go even further than this, and say, that the unity of our own being, which we seem to realize in our moments of religious insight, is a true mirror and reflection of the Unity of the Universe? It must be so, since unity in us is brought about by the apprehension of the World-Unity. The lesser unity images the greater, though it images it, only as a tiny pool beneath a cloudless sky reflects the infinite heaven.

If this argument be sound, we shall be able to say, that religion is justified in holding that God is personal, even though we have to admit, that there is an infinite

difference between personality in Him and in us. It has been established, that the attitude of soul by which we apprehend God, is an attitude which unites the theoretic, emotional and volitive attitudes into a unique complex, which is different from all of them. If now we call this attitude trust, or faith (and what better name can we give it?), we shall discern a new and fuller meaning in that great saying of Luther, "These two belong together, faith and God."¹ They belong together, because faith unifies and achieves our personality by its *rapprochement* with the Personality, that unifies the Universe.

¹ "Haec duo, fides et Deus, una copula conjungenda sunt" (*Greater Catechism*. Exposition of the First Commandment, 3).

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